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Obama reaches out to China's new president

WASHINGTON(AFP) - US President Barack Obama wasted no time in courting China's new President Xi Jinping yesterday, calling him within hours of his elevation, and raising key issues including cybercrime and North Korea.

Obama, beginning his second term as Xi embarks on his first, congratulated his new opposite number in the crucial US-China relationship, and announced the dispatch of two senior cabinet lieutenants to Beijing shortly.

The US president had a cordial yet sometimes frustratingly formal relationship with Xi's predecessor Hu Jintao, and his decision to reach out quickly to the new Chinese leadership may be a sign of intent.

The White House said Obama congratulated Xi on his new position and promised regular high-level engagement on economic and security challenges on which Beijing and Washington have been increasingly at odds in recent months.

Ritz Carlton expected to employ between 500-550 local employees

Last Wednesday, the Minister of Tourism met with top executive of The Ritz Carlton, Mark Ferland, who is Vice President for the South-East USA and the Caribbean for Ritz Carlton Hotels. Together with Ritz Carlton, Ensenanza pa Empleo and the Department of Labor, they will offer an extensive service course that can be presented to these students to equip them to come up to the level of service required by Ritz Carlton. Aruba must be able to offer the level of service required by Ritz Carlton visitors, which will keep Aruba's name at the top.

During this meeting different matters related to the successful opening of Ritz Carlton on Aruba were discussed. The Minister indicated that he was satisfied with the fact that this will have a very positive effect on our labor market.

The Minister emphasized that it will be important to employ local workers to occupy positions in this 5 star hotel. In



this manner we can offer those currently unemployed the opportunity to apply for work in this elite property. According to the Minister, as soon as Ritz Carlton is fully operational, they will contribute in reducing our unemployment rate as they will have 550 local employees in their employ.

They also discussed the possibility for, together with a Ritz

Carlton team, doing presentations at schools (Colleges/Universities) in Holland and the USA to encourage recent Aruban graduates in these countries the opportunity to return to Aruba to work at Ritz Carlton. They also explored the idea of offering recent EPI and EPB graduates opportunity for work as they will be in search of employment in the hotel sector.

KUWAIT CITY -- Indian Jyoti Amge, 19, the world's shortest woman sits next to Morocco's Brahim Takioullah, who has the largest feet of the world according to the Guinness Book of Records, during an event in Kuwait City, yesterday.

The tiny doll Jyoti is a resident of Nagpur.

Brahim Takioullah (born 26 January 1982 in Guelmim, Morocco) holds the Guinness World Record for largest feet and third-tallest living person

Amge and Takioullah are in Kuwait as part of a children's one-minute competition organized by the Guinness Book of Records.

(AFP PHOTO)



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Dr. Helen A. van der Wal: "Tomorrow's leaders are today's children"



On Friday, March 8, Aruba's Minister of Economic & Social Affairs and Culture, Michelle Hooyboer Winklaar, and her ministry hosted a full-day conference at the Renaissance Convention Center in honor of the 102nd International Women's Day. It was attended by over 800, of which a few were men, but it was not really an event just for women. It certainly fo-

capability. This message was brought closer to home by Dr. Helen A. van der Wal, Secretary of Aruba's Middle School Appeals Committee, President of SMC Research Foundation and Permanent Secretary of the State Council of Aruba. A criminologist with law and journalism degrees, she was co-founder and past President of the Child



cused on issues women face in attaining a equality in the workplace and society, as and their potential in world leadership, but many of the remarkable parade of guest speakers had great concern for the next generation, gender not being the issue.

Keynote speaker HRH Princess Laurentien of the Netherlands expressed this along with an enormous respect for children, their creativity and

Helpline Aruba.

Dr. van der Wal's talk was quite sobering, with assertions from her studies that literally elicited gasps from the audience as to the state of island youth and their education over the past few years. "Tomorrow's leaders are today's children," she told the audience. "The relevant question is, "Does the Aruban child, particularly the Aruban girl child,

have the opportunity to develop to her potential?" She acknowledged that most of the women at the event would assert that Aruba's young females have it, but also pointed out that not all women feel the need to be strong leaders.

"It is also true that our women, their children and our community in general, would benefit if more women could liberate themselves from a low employment work force," she continued. "75% of our workforce has a lower education at home, and as a result, a low income job. Most of them are women in Aruba. This figure is not a result of the lack of potential of our people or our women; but a result of poor output of our education and participation system and a result of lack of opportunity for children and adults to develop themselves to their full potential."

Dr. van der Wal stated her research found several factors that were disruptive to female education. Comparing Aruba to the Dutch and Caribbean situation, she said that Aruba shares many of the social issues for youth that plague the region, but "compared to many children in many Caribbean islands, Aruba's youth live a relatively sheltered and protect life. Our incidences of fights and violence against children are relatively low. We don't have "street children," child labor, or sex tourism targeting children... But Aruba has some issues."

A study revealed an unexpected number of psycho-social problems among Aruban youth, rivaling that of much more densely populated countries; children who require professional help, and Aruba does not have a sufficient youth mental health care system, in her educated opinion.

Continued on page 4

Haiti Prime Minister visits Aruba



Yesterday, Haiti Prime Minister Laurent Lamothe arrived in Aruba. He is accompanied by a large delegation comprising Minister of Tourism Stéphanie Balmir Villedrouin, Deputy Director General of the National Radio and Television of Haiti, Gamal Augustin and senior officials of the public administration.

The mandatory was warmly received at the airport by Aruba Minister of Finance and Communications, Mike De Meza, and Director of Aruba Foreign Affairs Department, Andy Lee.

The short visit to Aruba is part of efforts of the Martelly-Lamothe administration to attract new investment in Haiti.

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Productive National Social Dialogue on Justice!



Last Tuesday afternoon partners of the National Social Dialogue met at the Renaissance Convention Center to discuss the topic of justice, to include criminality in all its facets and how to prevent this from occurring. The Minister of Justice, Arthur Dowers and Prime Minister Eman as well as the Minister of Finance were in attendance. This was the first in a series of meetings which should eventually result in the adoption of a protocol of dif-



ferent actions for the short, medium and long terms.

Taco Stein opened the meeting with a presentation of a report of recommendations on different fields having either a direct or indirect influence on the functioning of our system of justice. There were also recommendations on how to form more public-private-partnerships (PPP), such as the existing PPP through the Visibility Team.

Reportedly, combating crime is an expensive matter and in some countries there is talk of disproportional investments. On the other hand, the only manner to combat criminality without incurring high

costs is by investing in prevention. This will include investing in education, in the development of our children, in the social and health of our children, according to the Minister of Justice.

Preventive actions also cost money, but is beneficial when more people realize this and collaborate together. The Aruba Hotel and Tourism Association (AHATA) and Aruba Time Share Association (ATSA) are contributing significantly towards crime prevention. In the context of this very successful PPP, they have agreed that the government will provide for additional police and the private partners will provide for more means, and material.

Continued on page 5

National Anthem and Flag Day swimming competition



SAVANETA – The Aruba Swimming Federation – AZB – announces they are organizing 2 swimming competitions.

The first is tonight at 7 p.m., where athletes of three different clubs: Aruba Dolphins, Stingray Swimming, and The Orca's Swimming Team will compete against each other in races of the 50m butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle categories.

The event begins and ends with a show by synchronized swimmers; they always bring

along the competitive mood for their event.

On Sunday, March 17, the Barracudas Synchronized Swimming Club will begin their technical routine trials, followed by the artistic portion, which is accompanied by music. The competitions begin at 9:00 and 11:30 a.m., respectively

The AZB invites everyone to come and support our aquatic athletes. The competitions are at the Roly Bisslik Olympic Swimming Pool in Savaneta. Entrance is FREE.

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Aura Casino: "Where players win"



Aura Casino at the Occidental Grand is the place to play right now! The cash prizes are flowing out and happy players are leaving with big smiles on their faces.

Recently, **Mrs. Kathy Seymore** was one of those happy winners. Mrs. Seymore found her lucky streak in the newly renovated Aura Casino "where players win."

She won the beautiful amount of **\$2,037,42** while playing on the brand new slot machine **"Quick Hits."**

Mrs. Seymore has been coming to Aruba for over 20 years, and this is the first time she won a Jackpot. She was very shocked and excited!

Another happy winner was **Mrs. Sandra Tranmer Cilloist**, who won a total amount of **\$1,036,25,-** at the Aura Casino while playing on the brand new slot machine **"Wings of Fire."**

Mrs. Gina Colletta also decided to join the winners. Mrs. Aument won a total amount of **\$1,010,80,-** playing the slotmachine **"Mermaid Wonders."**

And the winning just continued at the Aura Casino as **Mrs. Afroditi Chrisdis** also found her lucky streak in the

Casino "where players win".

Mrs. Chrisdis won a total amount of **\$1,514,29** at the Aura Casino at the Occidental Grand while playing on the brand new slot machine **"Wild Blue."**

Mr. Mareiro Dant was also another happy winner after walking away with the nice sum of **\$1,250**, won on the slot machine **"Bonus Times."**

Not wanting to be left out of the winners circle at the Aura Casino **Mrs. Pierina Alcavo** also walked away with winnings summing up to **\$1,947,30** won on the slot machine **"Sun & Moon Progressive."**

Staff & Management want to congratulate all the lucky winners and invite everyone to come and win at the Aura Casino at the Occidental Grand: **"Where players win."**

The center of Aruba has definitely shifted here at the Aura Casino, which happens to be smack-dab in the middle of all the action on Palm Beach.

Come and try your luck, maybe you can be one of Aura Casino's next lucky winners!

"Tomorrow's leaders are today's children"

Continued from page 2

"Children with emotional problems cannot develop themselves to their full potential. This explains, in part, the poor educational outcome... Another finding of my study is that these problems are highest among children who speak only Papiamentu at home. This immediately raises the question: Why?"

"If you look at the Caribbean, research shows in regards to children, the Caribbean has the highest incidence of interpersonal violence in the world. This violence consists of domestic violence, intimate partner violence, sexual violence and incest. For Caribbean children on other islands who are victims, or witness to this violence, this is the principal reason for their psycho-social and behavioral problems."

Though Aruban families are not known for these behavior patterns, Dr. van der Wal stated more in depth studies are required to fully comprehend the emotional issues of Aruba's youth, so they may realize their full potential. She cited the articles of the Conventions of the Rights of Children, to which Aruba is a signator. Article 24 states that emotionally troubled children are entitled to help, which implies that Aruban authorities must act.

"Another probable cause for emotional problems," she continued, "for which I found support in my study, was the inability of children to be able to express themselves properly. This too, was found mostly amongst children who spoke only Papiamentu in the home. This finding raises questions about the idea of the introduction of Papiamentu as a language of instruction in our primary and elementary schools would be a solution for the structural under-achievement of students that speak Papiamentu in the home. I argue that this is not the case. It is my experience

that children cannot express themselves properly, even in their native tongue, because they lack communication skills. This lack of skills originates from the traditional way in which many parents still raise their children."

"In the Aruban culture, we hardly read, and we hardly debate," she stated. She did commend, however, the Aruban government for their awareness of this, and steps being taken to resolve this problem. One independent program, "Bon Nochi, Drumu Dushi," actually sends facilitators into homes at children's bedtimes, for the family to gather around and read books.

"I know I don't make friends, stating this in the "Year of Papiamentu," but Papiamentu as a language of instruction in the schools will not help our children at all, if we, at the same time, do not teach them how to communicate. Not being able to express themselves, these children are frustrated... This inability hampers their development."

Dr. van der Wal pointed out that the International Convention on the Rights of the Child does NOT state that they should have the right to education in their own language. The stated rights do indicate that social and communication skills should be a part of the curriculum of every school in Aruba. Her study showed that girls like to go to school, and generally outperform the boys. Their reason for liking school was that it was a place to meet with their peers, and they cited Aruba's lack of after-school opportuni-



Dr. Helen A. van der Wal

ties that allowed them to do so. The reasons are numerous; but they also had complaints regarding boring lessons, lack of educational materials and interest among teachers, along with other issues, which dull student interest. Another complaint was the system required too many years to finish school. Her research found that Aruba had the highest rate of students held back and forced to repeat a year of schooling, in the entire Caribbean. There was ample evidence of under performance, resulting in youth not reaching their full potential.

Dr. van der Wal concluded the first part of her talk by expressing her concern for all island youth and students, girls and boys. "How can we empower our girls?... We can empower them by giving them skills, teaching them how to communicate and express themselves. But we must also teach the parents how to communicate with children, starting with them reading to their children at night... Most of all we can empower girls by giving them power. By listening to them and involving them in decision making. For that matter... children and youth are a lost species... that need emancipation in our society."

Rosalie Klein

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Productive National Social Dialogue . . .

Continued from page 3



According to Minister Dowers, we need projects for young people; educational, recreational or cultural programs at school which also contributes to prevention. Unfortunately, what is often lacking for these programs to get going is an initial investment. It is the lack of initial investment is what has many projects on hold.

The government is appealing to everyone to recognize the need for investment in programs to help with crime prevention. Each of us needs to do our part to make these investments possible in education and in our social system to guarantee that our children can develop in the healthiest manner possible. This will be good for the community and for the economy of our island, according to Minister Dowers.

Both parties have complied with their commitment and this expansion is producing positive results.

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Aruba Swimming Association delegation off to Chile!

On Monday, March 11th, swimmers Ginayla Arends, Rebecca Maduro, Ally Ponson, Gaby Ponson, Mikel Schreuders and Tyreke Wernet, together with their Head Coach, Ismael Santiesteban, boarded the plane on their way to Valparaiso, Chile.

Accompanying the swimmers were: leader of the delegation, Ludmilla Maduro, physiotherapist, Monica Schreuders, and chaperone Victor duro. They are off to Chile to participate in the South-American Youth Swimming Championship. On Tuesday, Daniella van den Berg and Jordy Groters left from Miami to meet the rest of the team in Chile.

As of Thursday and for 4 days, our swimmers will compete in the swimming pool against the best swimmers in their categories of South America. They will be competing to achieve positions of honor. In



the 13-14 years female category, Aruba will be represented by Ginayla and Rebecca. Both girls will compete in the 50m, 100m, 200m and 400m freestyle. Mikel (100 and 200 breaststroke, 200 and 400 medley) and Tyreke (100 butterfly move, 50 and 100 freestyle). Mikel and Tyreke are the male representatives for Aruba in the same category. In the 15-17 years category, Ally (50, 100, 200 and 400 freestyle), Gaby (50, 100 and 200 freestyle), and

Daniella (400 and 800 freestyle) will do their utmost to dominate the freestyle events and rank in the positions of honor for Aruba. Finally, Jordy will represent Aruba in the 100 and 200 breaststroke and 100 freestyle. The Aruba delegation is expected back home on Monday, March 18th. Arubaanse Zwembond wishes our athletes much success in Chile.

The Morning News also wishes them great success in their endeavors!



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International news

Pope's election revives row over Argentine junta

BUENOS AIRES (AFP) - Argentine cardinal Jorge Bergoglio's election as Pope Francis has revived a long-standing controversy over his role during the dark days of his homeland's "Dirty War."

Francis's elevation was widely celebrated in Argentina, but some accuse him and his country's church of having been too close to the brutal right-wing junta in power between 1976 and 1983.

In 2010, Bergoglio was questioned as a witness by judges probing the arrest and torture of two young Jesuits, Orlando Yorio and Francisco Jalics, who were taken to the notorious Naval School of Mechanics in March 1976.

ESMA was known as a torture center during the so-called Dirty War, in which government agents targeted suspected left-wing activists, tens of thousands of whom were "disappeared."

Yorio and Jalics were freed alive after five months.

Bergoglio was alleged to have betrayed the young missionaries to the regime because they had become opposition sympathizers and he wanted to preserve the Jesuits' political neutrality.

He was also questioned in two more investigations into alleged regime crimes, but no charges were brought and he denied any wrongdoing.

Horacio Verbitsky, a leftist author and militant who has written extensively on the Dirty War, claims that he has found "five new witnesses who confirm Bergoglio's role in the military government's crack-

down."

Verbitsky maintains that the church actively collaborated with the regime and was even complicit in the disappearance of dissident priests.

For his part, Bergoglio has always denied any implication in the case of the two tortured missionaries, and even insists he intervened with the then head of the junta, Jorge Videla, to beg for their freedom.

"He even allowed them to leave for Italy," said Jose Maria Poirier, director of the Argentine Catholic journal Criterio.

"Some clergymen stayed silent, others were complicit. There were bishops who sympathized with the dictatorship, but that's not the case with Bergoglio, he's a man beyond reproach."

And 81-year-old Argentine architect Alfredo Perez Esquivel, himself a torture victim and winner of the 1980 Nobel Peace Prize for his human rights advocacy, came to Bergoglio's defence in an interview with BBC radio.

"There were bishops who were accomplices of the dictatorship, but Bergoglio was not," he said. "There is no link between him and the dictatorship."

A group accused of crimes against humanity under the dictatorship appeared in court wearing Vatican rosettes in honor of Bergoglio's new papal duties.

The defendants sat in the dock wearing the Vatican insignia on the lapel of their jackets during a hearing in the northwestern city of Cordoba.

'Obama: Over year or so' for Iran to get the bomb

JERUSALEM (AFP) - Iran is "over a year or so" from getting a nuclear bomb, US President Barack Obama said in an interview yesterday, a week before visiting Israel, warning that the military option remained on the table.

In an interview with Israel's Channel 2 television, Obama laid out a clear timeline for Iran to acquire a military nuclear capacity, while insisting that Washington would not wait until the last minute to take action to stop it.

"We think that it would

NYC hails record population figures

NEW YORK (AFP) - New York City is now home to a record 8.34 million people, Mayor Michael Bloomberg announced yesterday, emphasizing that more people are moving in than out for the first time in six decades.

There were 8,336,697 million New Yorkers in April 2012, compared to 8,175,133 two years earlier, the mayor said, making public the latest figures from the federal Census Bureau.

New York is, by far, the most heavily populated US city -- well ahead of Los Angeles (3.7 million residents in 2010) and Chicago (2.7 million). It houses more than 42 percent of the population of New York State.

"People are voting with their feet," said Bloomberg, highlighting improvements to "many indicators of quality of life," including low crime, high life expectancy, job growth and record tourism.

"For the first time since before 1950, more people are coming to New York City than leaving," the mayor enthused.

The population increase is seen most strongly in Brooklyn, the city's biggest borough, which saw a 2.4 percent jump to 2.6 million residents, and in Manhattan, which saw a 2.1 percent jump to 1.6 million residents.

take over a year or so for Iran to actually develop a nuclear weapon, but obviously, we don't want to cut it too close," he said in an exclusive 25-minute interview with the private TV station.

Obama is due to arrive in Israel on March 20 for a three-day visit, his first since being elected president in 2008, on a trip which will also take him to the Palestinian territories.

Should diplomacy fail, all options remained "on the table" for stopping Iran, he said.

"My message to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will be the same as before: if we can resolve it diplomatically, that's a more lasting solution. But if not, I continue to keep all options on the table," he said.

Asked if there was a realistic option that he would order an attack on Iran's nuclear sites, he said: "When I say that all options are on the table, all options are on the table and the United States obviously has significant capabilities."

"But our goal here is to make sure that Iran does not possess a nuclear weapon that could threaten Israel or could trigger an arms race in the region -- that would be extraordinarily dangerous at a time

when obviously there are already a lot of things going on," he said.

Washington, Israel and much of the West believe that Iran's nuclear program of uranium enrichment is a cover for a weapons drive, a charge denied by Tehran.

Iran possessing a nuclear weapons would be "a red line" for the United States, Obama said, insisting that he would have the necessary support within his cabinet should a military strike become necessary.

"I think my cabinet is prepared for a whole range of contingencies," he told the channel.

"Secretary (of State John) Kerry and Secretary (of Defense Chuck) Hagel share my fundamental view that the issue of Iran's nuclear capability is an issue of US national security interest as well as Israel's national security interest."

Israel, the Middle East's sole if undeclared nuclear power, has refused to rule out the option of a pre-emptive military strike on the Islamic republic's nuclear facilities, and Netanyahu has said the question of Iran would be a top priority in his talks with Obama in Jerusalem.



AFP photo shows cars driving through heavy snowfall in Berlin on March 14, 2013. Temperatures in the German capital were at minus three degrees Celsius, the melting Arctic ice is causing the North Atlantic to warm, which is bringing a lot more precipitation to the region. That means the miserable weather of northwest Europe has gone from bad to worse with even more rain and snow because of the warming seas. As the Arctic ice melts, the situation is likely to become worse.



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International News

Israel's Peres hails Pope Francis, invites him to Holy Land

JERUSALEM (AFP) - Israeli President Shimon Peres on Thursday welcomed the election of Pope Francis, saying he represented "holy modesty" and inviting him to visit the Holy Land.

"The newly-elected pope represents devotion, the love of God, the love of peace, a holy modesty and a new continent which is now awakening," Peres said a day after the election of Argentinian cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio as the first-ever pontiff from Latin America.

"We need, more than ever, a spiritual leadership and not just a political one," Peres said during talks with Polish Catholic clergy at his Jerusalem residence in remarks relayed by his office.

"Where political leaders may divide, spiritual leaders

may unite -- unite around a vision, unite around values, unite around a faith that we can make the world a better place to live. May the Lord bless the new pope."

Peres also invited Francis "to pay a visit to the Holy Land at the earliest possibility."

"He'll be a welcome guest in the Holy Land, as a man of inspiration that can add to the attempt to bring peace in a stormy area," said Peres.

"All people here, without exception, without difference of religion or nationality will welcome the newly-elected pope."

The president said relations between the Vatican and Jewish people were "now at their best in the last 2,000 years, and I hope they will grow in content and depth."

US Senate panel backs assault weapons ban

WASHINGTON (AFP) - A US Senate panel on Thursday approved a Democratic bill that would ban assault weapons and high-capacity gun magazines, in a party line vote three months to the day after the school massacre in Newtown, Connecticut.

The Senate Judiciary Committee voted 10-8 for the bill, seen by many as the most problematic element of President Barack Obama's push to reduce weapons violence by tightening up Americans' almost unfettered access to firearms.

The assault weapons measure -- as well as three other items approved earlier in the package of proposed gun reforms -- would result in the most substantial change to US gun legislation in a generation.

But the measures face an uphill battle, meeting with stiff opposition not just from Obama's Republican foes in Congress, but from many con-

servative-leaning Democrats as well.

The White House and Congress have zeroed in on potential measures to reduce gun violence in the wake of the Newtown massacre on December 14, when a gunman went into Sandy Hook Elementary School and in a matter of minutes killed 20 young children and six adults before taking his own life.

The semi-automatic Bushmaster XM15 rifle, the weapon used during the assault by accused gunman Adam Lanza, is the same sort of high-powered, automatic firearm that would be prohibited if the bill were to become law.

The committee in recent days passed a gun-trafficking bill that would toughen penalties against people who purchase firearms for others who are not allowed to own weapons.

It also signed off on a meas-

ure to boost funding for school security and another tightening up background checks on would-be gun purchasers.

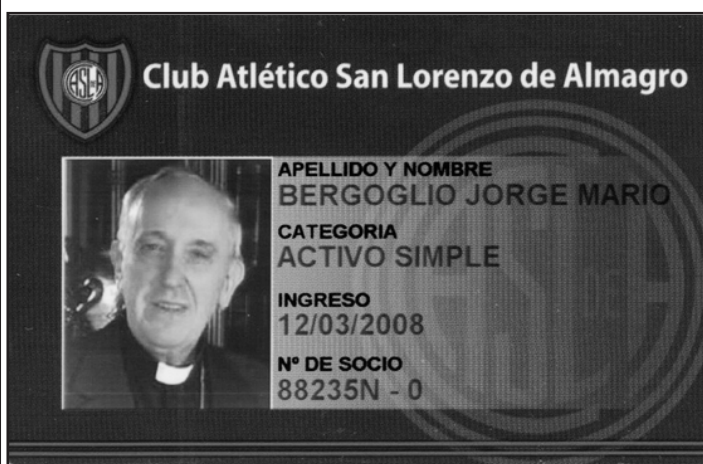
The proposed assault weapons ban approved Thursday is a revamped version of a law that was allowed to lapse in 2004.

But that ban -- along with the universal background checks and other tightened gun regulations -- is vehemently opposed by most Republicans, and Democrats have struggled to find any GOP lawmakers willing to sign on.

The gun reform bill would need 60 votes to overcome Republican obstruction in the 100-seat Senate. Democrats hold 55 seats so they would need at least five Republicans to go along.

The bill then faces an even tougher road finding sufficient support for passage in the Republican-held US House of Representatives.

His Holiness a football fan



BUENOS AIRES (AFP) - Handout photo released by San Lorenzo football club press service of Argentinian cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio's club membership ID card. He shares the passion his countrymen have for football and is an avid fan of San Lorenzo, one of Argentina's top clubs; he received his club membership card after giving mass at a sports complex near the team's stadium.

North Korea confirms end of war armistice

SEOUL (AFP) - North Korea confirmed yesterday that it had shredded the 60-year-old armistice ending the Korean War, and warned that the next step was an act of "merciless" military retaliation against its enemies.

A lengthy statement by the North's armed forces ministry added to the tide of dire threats flowing from Pyongyang in recent days that have raised military tensions on the Korean peninsula to their highest level for years.

The statement carried by the official Korean Central News Agency argued that the real "warmongering" was coming from the United States and its "puppets" in Seoul.

The North announced last week that it would nullify the 1953 armistice and peace pacts signed with Seoul in protest

over joint South Korea-US military manoeuvres that began on Monday.

Because the Korean War was concluded with an armistice rather than a peace treaty, the two Koreas have always remained technically at war.

Voiding the ceasefire theoretically opens the way to a resumption of hostilities, although observers note this is far from the first time that North Korea has announced the demise of the armistice.

The armistice was approved by the UN General Assembly, and both the United Nations and South Korea have repudiated the North's unilateral withdrawal.

The North has also threatened to launch nuclear strikes against the United States and South Korea in response to fresh UN sanctions adopted

after the North carried out its third nuclear test last month.

While the threats have been mostly dismissed as bluster, there are strong concerns that the North will attempt some form of military provocation in the coming weeks.

As well as nullifying ceasefire agreements, the North severed a Red Cross hotline that was one of the few means of communication between Pyongyang and Seoul, which do not have diplomatic relations.

However, a spokeswoman for the presidential Blue House in Seoul said a military hotline was still operating.

"The military communication is working normally and we will seek to convey any message to the North via the channel when necessary," she said.

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Health & Living

Dozens of children rescued in raids in India

JAIPUR (AFP) - Indian officials have freed 51 children kept in "pathetic conditions" in the city of Jaipur amid suspicions they were held as part of a human trafficking racket, officials said Thursday.

The state-funded Rajasthan Commission for Protection of Child Rights said 27 girls aged between seven and 17 years were among the children found on Tuesday in two homes.

Commission chief Deepak Kalra said officials raided the two premises, which claimed they were working as children's homes, following a tip-off from a New Delhi-based activist organisation.

"The children mostly from states in the northeast were brought here on the pretext of providing education by one Jacob John but they were confined to the homes here," the commission chief said.

Jaipur is the capital of Rajasthan state, which is popular among tourists.

"The children were not allowed to go outside, even people living nearby were unaware that such a centre was functional in the area," Kalra said.

State Rajasthan Women and Child Development Minister Bina Kak said a probe was under way.

"They lived in pathetic conditions but whether they were exploited or not is a matter of investigation," Kak said, adding that police had arrested the owner of the two homes.

India's federal detectives said last year that there were 815 gangs comprising of more than 5,000 members involved in the kidnapping of children for prostitution and begging across India.

An estimated 50,000 children go missing every year in India, according to a petition.

World's largest biogas plant inaugurated in Finland



HELSINKI (AFP) - The world's largest biogas plant was Monday inaugurated on Finland's western coast as the country seeks to limit its use of foreign coal. Built near an existing coal-fired power plant in Vaasa, central Finland, the 140 megawatt biomass gasification factory is expected to cut coal use by up to 40 percent. Fuelled mainly with wood residue from Finland's large forestry sector, the plant is expected to reduce carbon-dioxide emissions by 230,000 tons a year while providing both heating and electricity for Vaasa's approximately 61,000 residents. The plant's operator, Vaskiluodon Voima, said it would also help create hundreds of new jobs in the region.

H1N1 flu jab linked to small risk of nervous disorder



PARIS (AFP) - Vaccination in the United States against H1N1 "swine" flu, which swept the world in 2009-10, carried a small but tolerable risk of Guillain-Barre syndrome, a disorder that can cause muscle weakness or temporary paralysis, a study said.

US researchers scanned a database of side effects from the campaign in which 23 million Americans were inoculated with a so-called monovalent inactivated vaccine against H1N1.

They recorded 77 cases of Guillain-Barre that occurred within three months of a vaccination.

Compared to normal times, incidence amounted to about 1.6 extra cases per one million people vaccinated, which means the benefit of the jab "greatly outweighed" the risks, they said.

The modest incidence was probably similar to cases of Guillain-Barre that arise from annual vaccination for "seasonal" flu, they said.

The study, said about 61 million cases of H1N1 were recorded in the United States during the pandemic, leading to 274,000 hospital admissions and 12,470 deaths.

Research published last month estimated that vaccination prevented between 700,000 and 1.5 million cases of flu in the United States, between 4,000 and 10,000 admissions and up to 500 deaths.

The American inoculation programme did not use Pandemrix, a vaccine that uses a booster to prime the immune system against the H1N1 virus.

According to investigations in Finland, Sweden and England, Pandemrix increased the risk of narcolepsy, a disorder that causes extreme drowsiness, among teenagers and young people, although the extent of the problem is unclear.

More than a fifth of the world's population was infected with the H1N1 virus in the 2009-2010 pandemic, according to estimates published in January.

Health watchdogs anxiously monitor mutations of the flu virus, fearing the emergence of new strains against which humans would have no resistance.

Tens of millions of people were killed in the 1918-19 pandemic of so-called Spanish flu.

Guillain-Barre occurs when the body starts to attack nerves involved in movement and sometimes respiration and other functions.



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Sci-Tech

After 2012 drought, US farmers adapt for climate change

DES MOINES (AFP) - Emerging from the worst drought in 50 years, US farmers are bracing for long-term challenges from climate change including blasting heat and more capricious rainfall.

About 80 percent of the farmland in the world's biggest soybean and corn (maize) producer was scorched by extreme heat and drought last summer, savaging crops and sending global prices for the key food commodities soaring, hurting poor countries that depend on imports.

Across the heartland of the corn crop in the Midwest state of Iowa, farmers have turned a jaundiced eye on last season's disaster to focus on this year's weather conditions.

By early March, 53 percent of the land was still abnormally dry or suffering drought.

But as more and more accept that the climate is changing, farmers are putting their faith in technology to help them beat global warming.

For Bruce Rohwer, the vagaries of weather are part and parcel of agriculture.

"My grandfather was farming during the Dust Bowl drought in the '30s, my father was farming in the '50s," said Rohwer, president of the Iowa Corn Growers Association in Des Moines. "In my career, I have faced several droughts and floods. We will be challenged to do our best practices."

The consequences of the 2012 drought have been severe.

As crop yields plummeted, corn and soybean prices hit records. Livestock like cattle were sent to slaughter prematurely because of parched grazing land and sky-high feed prices.

Even so, farmers largely weathered the crisis. High prices offset lower yields. And yields would have been much worse without the widespread use of genetically modified seeds especially resistant to dry conditions.

And insurers compensated the losses with a record \$14.7 billion in payouts -- enough to allow farmers to get ready for a new season.

Most Iowa farmers recognize that the climate is changing, according to a survey conducted by Iowa State University, even if many do not blame human activity for it.

Over the short term, the US Department of Agriculture says, the country's farms will be "fairly resilient to climate change" due to their ability to adapt to challenges.

For one, farmers are betting on advances in genetically modified seeds that can withstand more heat and drier conditions.

They are also increasing crop rotation and limiting practices that boost moisture evaporation and exacerbate soil erosion.

Many are investing in new irrigation and drainage systems that not only drain off excess water but can retain water within them for later use.

Agri Drain, which makes some of the new systems, says sales are booming in the US and Canada.

The USDA says such adaptations might not be enough in the coming decades, predicting that yields and farm incomes will decline as temperature increases mount and precipitation extremes intensify by mid-century.

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China to boost renewable energy in 2013

BEIJING (AFP) - China will sharply boost renewable energy this year, it said after repeated bouts of heavy pollution across much of the country heightened public anger on the issue over recent weeks.

The country plans to in-

crease hydropower generating capacity by 21 million kilowatts this year, wind by 18 million kilowatts and solar energy by 10 million kilowatts, the National Development and Reform Commission said in a report.

China depends heavily on

coal to power its growth but has set a goal of increasing non-fossil energy use to 15 percent of its total consumption by 2020, up from 9.6 percent in 2010, as part of efforts to address the pollution problem.

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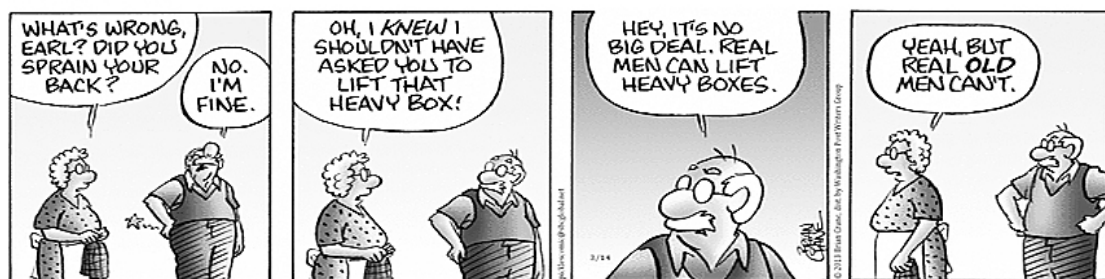
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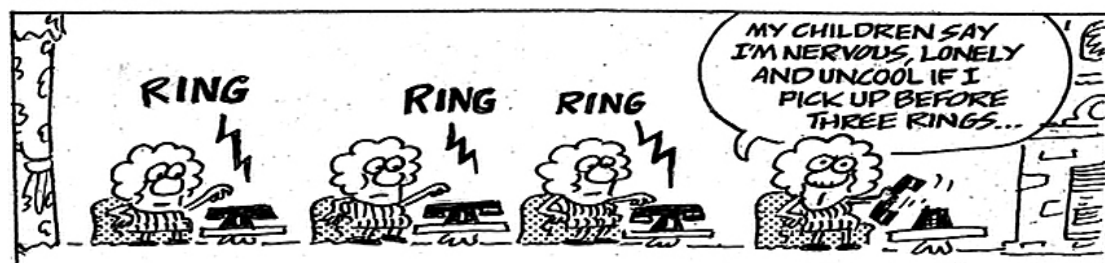
COMICS



PICKLES



MOMMA



CALVIN and HOBBS



CROSSWORD



CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1. Baby's sleeping spot
5. Cole Hamels's org.
8. Car sound
12. Olympus queen
13. IM provider
14. Soften
15. Hip to (2 wds.)
16. Lennon's widow
17. Meat fat
18. Bracer
20. Asian desert
22. Ship's pronoun
24. Demure
28. Zeus's warrior daughter
31. Georgia beauty
32. Intense rage
33. Sharpened
35. Recline
36. Case or well preceder
38. Married in Vegas, maybe
40. Connecticut seaport
42. Common virus
43. Auctioneer's shout
45. Nudging joint
49. Like mature fruit
52. Charged particle
54. Mineral deposit
55. Aloud

DOWN

56. Pencil stub
57. Author Bagnold
58. Young cow
59. Melodic syllable
60. Poor grades
1. Marker
2. Clinton AG Janet
3. Golf club
4. Cast out
5. ___ jacket ('60s style)
6. Like Rapunzel's hair
7. Open up, as a bud
8. Abutting
9. ___ de cologne

10. WNW's opp.
11. Tame animal
19. Fleet Street farewell
21. 1996 Presidential candidate (2 wds.)
23. Remnant
25. Fashion model Macpherson
26. Slithered
27. Golfer's peg
28. Like a Bohemian
29. Lipton beverages
30. Ripen
32. Suffix for a doctrine
34. Gnome
37. "...thing we have to fear is

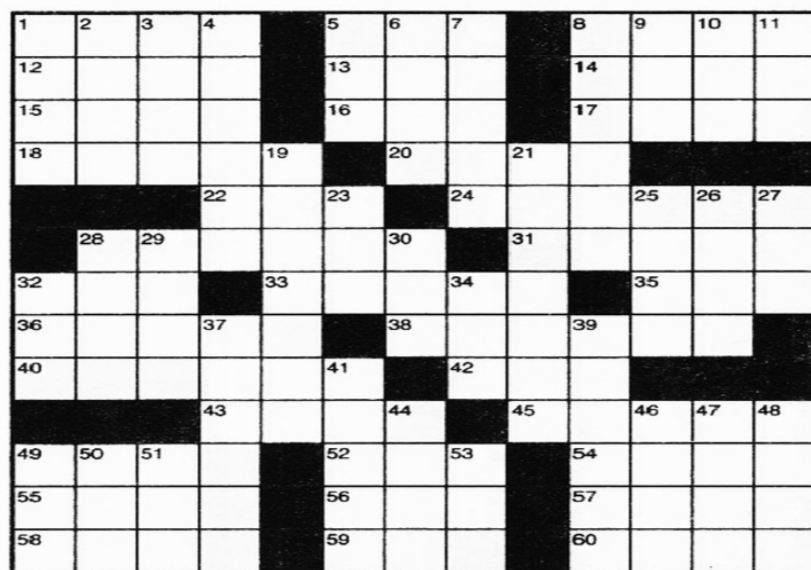
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fear ___"
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39. Tugged
41. Country singer Black
44. Sullen
46. Funny ___
47. "Garfield" character
48. Unites
49. Fabled bird
50. Retiree's acct.
51. Sidekick
53. Cagers' gp.

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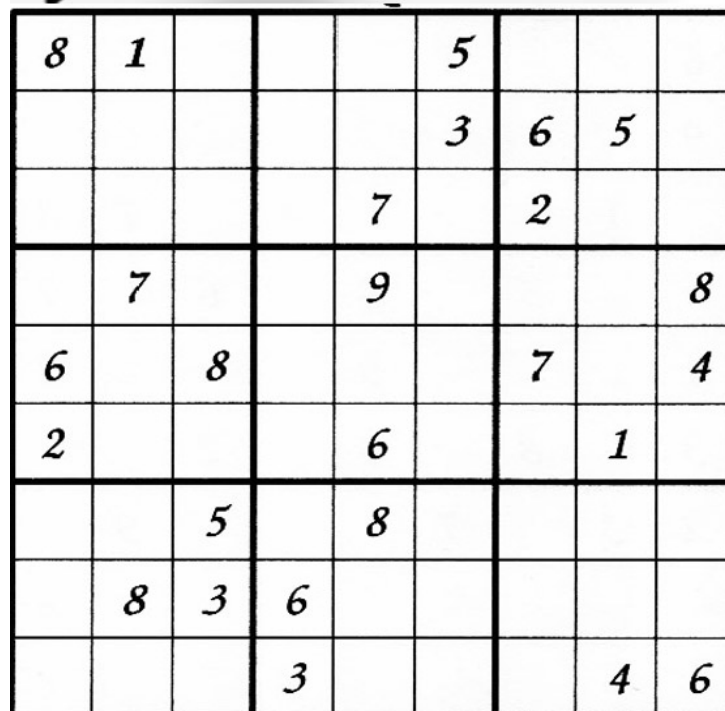
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Sudoku



SOLUTIONS

9	4	8	6	5	2	7	1	3
5	2	1	7	9	8	6	3	4
7	6	3	2	4	1	5	9	8
1	8	6	9	7	5	3	2	4
4	2	7	1	3	8	6	9	5
8	9	5	6	2	1	7	4	3
1	8	2	9	7	4	6	5	3
6	5	9	1	8	7	3	2	4
2	7	4	3	6	9	1	8	5

Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9
A number is Never repeated in a row or column.
In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9

Finance

EU leaders wrestle with austerity as thousands protest

BRUSSELS(AFP) - European Union leaders wrestled on Thursday with German demands for strict austerity and a French-led push for growth-friendly spending at a summit targeted by thousands of protesters angry over rampant unemployment.

The two-day meeting opened at around with French President Francois Hollande calling on fellow leaders to lift an arms embargo on Syria to help insurgents fighting the regime of President Bashar al-Assad.

Hollande held head-to-head talks with British Prime Minister David Cameron after saying on arrival at the venue: "We are ready to support the rebellion."

The summit will also feature a gathering of eurozone-only leaders overnight and eurozone finance ministers later on Friday, tackling a multi-billion-euro bailout for Cyprus --

the fifth for an EU state since Greece first needed rescuing three years ago.

Heads of state and government were also to look at relations with key partners, notably Russia, but as demonstrators had gathered outside, austerity hardliner German Chancellor Angela Merkel said it was necessary that young people in Europe are able to find jobs.

Hollande, whose pro-growth push over recent months has gained added weight thanks to a big anti-austerity vote in Italian elections last month, said the "only priority" leaders had to face today was finding fresh ways to boost growth.

The French Socialist has admitted his government will not be able to cut its public deficit to the EU limit of 3.0 percent of gross domestic product this year, coming in instead at 3.7 percent as a weak economy exacts its toll.

Failing to meet the target leaves France needing another year of grace from Brussels, an extension it seems likely to get.

Belgian Prime Minister Elio Di Rupo, a political ally, said that "with 26 million unemployed, it is only natural that we ask the EU to develop policies which tend towards more growth."

Among the protesters, Mads Hadberg of Denmark, a 25-year-old student, asked: "Why should the people be paying for the crisis the banks created?... People are losing jobs, health benefits, pensions -- and the rich are getting richer."

As the meeting began, hopes rose in Cyprus that a deal on its long-delayed financial rescue could be sealed come Friday's finance talks, which were also to be attended by International Monetary Fund managing director Christine Lagarde.

S&P 500 flirts with record in bull market

NEW YORK(AFP) - The S&P 500 flirted with an all-time high Thursday as equity markets continued their upward march in the wake of strong labor data and bullish market sentiment.

The S&P 500, a broad-based index that includes all major segments of the US economy, finished at 1,563.23, up 8.71 points (0.56 percent). The all-time closing record of 1,565.15 was set in October 2007.

The S&P 500 looked to follow in the footsteps of the Dow Jones Industrial Average, which broke its all-time record for the eighth straight day, closing at 14,539.14, up 83.86 (0.58 percent).

The tech-rich Nasdaq Composite index climbed 13.81 (0.43 percent) to 3,258.93.

The trading was boosted by news that US jobless claims declined for the third week in a row, sinking 10,000 to 332,000.

Banking equities were among the biggest gainers, with JPMorgan Chase picking up 1.7 percent, Bank of America adding 0.4 percent and Goldman Sachs rising 1.4 percent.

But some technology firms saw big drops. Amazon retreated 3.4 percent, Netflix sank 2.1 percent and E*TRADE Financial declined 8.2 percent.

Men's Wearhouse rose 19.1 percent despite reporting a deeper loss than expected. The clothing chain announced a \$200 million share repurchase

program and said it had hired investment bank Jefferies to help it consider "strategic alternatives" for its K&G discount stores.

EMC and VMware added gains for a second day after unveiling their ambitious new joint initiative for a cloud-based data processing company. EMC shares were up 2.9 percent, while VMware rose 4.6 percent.

Bond prices fell. The yield on the 10-year Treasury rose to 2.03 percent compared with 2.02 percent late Wednesday, while the 30-year yield rose to 3.24 percent from 3.22 percent. Bond prices and yields move inversely.



MADRID (AFP) - Spanish students hold placards and banners as they protest against government's austerity measures in Madrid yesterday.



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	Dutch Antilles	ANG	98.00	100.00
	Canada	CAD	1.77	1.79
	Britain	GBP	2.80	2.85
	Switzerland	CHF	191.71	192.43
	Netherlands	EUR	230.59	232.69
	Sweden	SEK	25.91	26.63
	Denmark	DKK	30.23	30.95
	Norway	NOK	30.67	31.39
	Japan	JPY	214.88	216.84
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Michigan governor taps bankruptcy expert to run Detroit

CHICAGO (AFP) - Michigan Governor Rick Snyder tapped a restructuring expert who helped successfully steer Chrysler through a government-backed bankruptcy to lead a state takeover of Detroit.

The move by a white, Republican governor to take control of a predominantly black and Democratic city has drawn intense criticism and charges of racism.

The choice of Kevyn Orr, an African American and Democrat who grew up in Michigan, should help stem some of that criticism.

Detroit Mayor Dave Bing, who has been widely praised for cleaning up after a succession of corrupt predecessors, joined Snyder and Orr for the announcement and said it was well past time to address the Motor City's troubled finances.

"We will do everything we can to be good team mates," Bing told reporters. "This city deserves that. This region deserves that. This state deserves that."

Once the fourth largest city in the United States, Detroit

has seen its population shrink by more than half from 1.8 million people in 1950 to 713,000 today.

Racial tensions sparked by the civil rights movement and the devastating 1967 riots exacerbated white and middle-class flight to the suburbs. Businesses followed suit, further shrinking Detroit's tax base.

With less revenue, the city had to cut back on services, prompting more people to leave.

The birthplace of the US auto industry then saw its main employers endure round after round of mass layoffs, as factories were automated or outsourced and Asian competitors siphoned away market share.

Abandoned skyscrapers, factories and homes litter the landscape. Crime is rampant. The city can't even manage to keep all the street lights on.

Orr, whose appointment as emergency manager must still be approved by a state board, insisted he would be able to get Detroit back on track within 18 months.

YESTERDAY'S
Crossword Answer

F	A	L	S	E		C	A	V	E
A	L	O	H	A		I	O	W	A
B	E	A	R	S		T	R	E	L
						E	T	C	H
J	E	R	K		O	A	R		A
F	Y	I		H	I	D		S	H
K	E	N	N	E	L		C	A	S
						T	R		E
A	R	I	A		G	E	L		A
S	E	N		R	E	N	D	E	R
H	A	T	B	A	N	D		G	N
L	I	O	N	E	L		O	I	L
N	O	D	S					S	E

Brickell Bay Sand Beach lounge featuring live music this Sunday



--Aruba's newest lounge, Brickell Bay Sand Beach, in Palm Beach, created quite a stir with its recent opening, revealing a chic, unique environment that has strongly attracted island fashionistas as a relaxed, elegant place to



while away the evening hours.

The new eatery/nightclub has live music twice weekly, and this Sunday will feature one of the island's most popular and dynamic entertainers of the last decade, Marisela and the Aquarius Band. She is back on Aruba for a limited engagement and will be appearing every Sun-

day through January at Brickell Bay Sand Beach Lounge.

Marisela will be heating up Palm Beach for a very cool night each weekend beginning this Sunday, January 6, from 6:00 to 9:00 PM. This is a performer known for "bringing down the house," so don't miss this rare opportunity to enjoy some great entertainment and discover Aruba's most stylish new nightspot.



Every Wednesday, The Ryders will be rockin' the house from 9:00 PM until midnight. Enjoy two for one drinks on all brands, even premium, from 4:00 to 7:00 PM every Monday through Thursday, and from 5:00 to 7:00 PM on Friday and Saturday, with an additional late night "Happy

Hour" on the weekends from 10:00 to 11:00 PM.

Brickell Bay Sand Beach lounge is located directly across the street from the South Beach Center. If you are wondering what is new and hip on Aruba, this is it!

Pope Francis' views on key points of faith, ideology

BUENOS AIRES (AFP) - Argentina's Jorge Bergoglio, who has chosen the name Francis as pope, is seen by many religion scholars as a centrist on matters of Roman Catholic doctrine.

In keeping with his Jesuit tradition, however, he is seen as progressive on many social issues like helping the poor and oppressed.

Here is a summary of his views on a variety of issues.

S A M E - S E X M A R - R I A G E / G E N D E R I D E N T I T Y :

As Cardinal, Bergoglio was a fierce opponent of legislation which passed in Argentina in July 2010 legalizing gay marriage.

"Let's not be naive. This is not just a political struggle. It is destructive to God's plan," Bergoglio said shortly before the vote. It was one of many sticking points in his rocky relationship with President Cristina Kirchner, with whom he has clashed over the years.

Bergoglio also disapproved of a bill passed in May 2012 to grant recognition to transvestites and transsexuals under their elected gender.

ABORTION AND BIRTH CONTROL:

In keeping with mainstream Catholic thought, he opposes terminating the life of an unborn child.

"A pregnant woman does not carry in her womb a toothbrush, or a tumor. Science shows that from the moment of

conception, the new being has the whole genetic code," he said.

The new pope is against all use of condoms, even to prevent AIDS. He is seen as likely to maintain the current line against other forms of birth control as well.

EUTHANASIA:

Francis is opposed to euthanasia, even in the case of those who are sick or the elderly.

BAPTISM:

In 2012, he urged priests from all 11 dioceses in Buenos Aires to baptize all newborns, including those conceived or born out-of-wedlock.

PEDOPHILIA AND THE CHURCH:

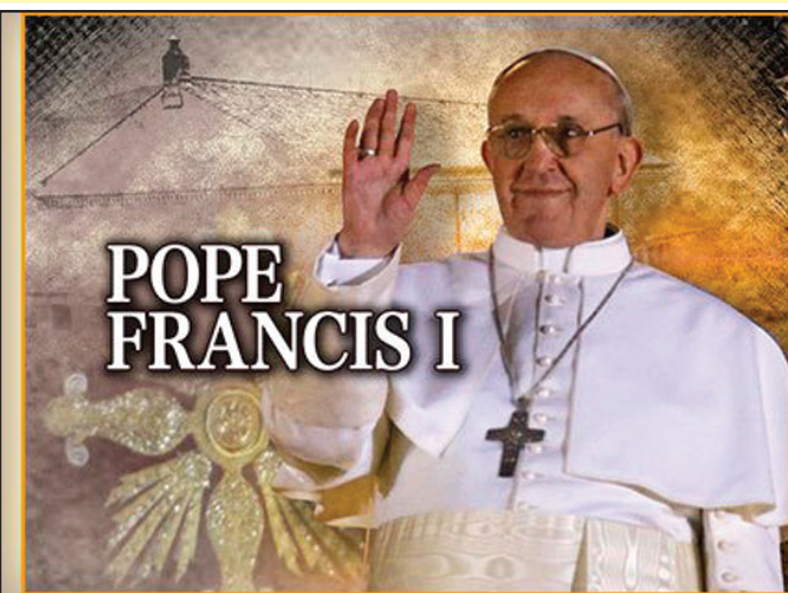
As Cardinal, Bergoglio has not spoken out on the pedophilia crisis.

Three Catholic priests have been criminally prosecuted since 2002 for sexual abuse of minors, and are serving prison sentences for their crimes. In addition, two bishops have resigned over child sex abuse scandals.

The Catholic Church in Argentina, however, has refrained from issuing a public statement in any of those cases, saying it would defer to whatever judgment is reached by the judicial system.

ARGENTINA'S DICTATORSHIP:

Bergoglio now 76, was 40



when a military junta overthrew the government and launched what came to be known as Argentina's "Dirty War," during which as many as 30,000 people disappeared.

He has been criticized for not being more outspoken in opposition to the regime and for allegedly failing to protect two Jesuit priests who opposed Argentina's military junta after they were kidnapped in 1976.

"I did what I could for a person of my age and with few ties to turn to advocate for kidnapped persons," he said in the book, "The Jesuit."

CHURCH REFORMS:

He is against ending celibacy among priests or changing the role of women in the church, nor is he expected to support changes in the Church's treatment of divorced

Catholics and gays.

LIBERATION THEOLOGY/POLITICS:

The new pope has often said that he opposes the church meddling in politics.

Bergoglio fought to prevent Jesuits from joining the liberation theology movement, which drew many of the continent's Catholic priests into political activity in opposition to right-wing governments.

He is viewed, however, as giving strong backing to social justice teachings of the church, despite shunning liberation theology's efforts to link the Catholic faith to the fight against political oppression.

Despite being avowedly apolitical, he has had a famously testy relationship with the current President Christina Kirchner as well as her late

husband who preceded her as Argentina's leader.

Nestor Kirchner, who died in 2010, famously accused Bergoglio of being "the true leader of the opposition" the country.

GLOBALIZATION:

The new pope is not against globalization but warns that it has its pitfalls, including an increasingly homogeneous world culture.

"We cannot deny the cultures of our own people," he has said. "That is the big danger."

While he is against mingling politics and religion, he has said that he believes that lay people can do much good at the level of policy, but that "ideologies always lead to violence."

COMMUNISM AND CAPITALISM:

Francis excoriates both world views for their "internal contradictions" and warns that "we should not resign ourselves to passively accept economic tyranny" -- which he said is possible under both systems.

The new pope has focused much of his work in Argentina on helping the poor, infirm and the drug-addicted.

He was particularly outspoken on behalf of the less fortunate during Argentina's financial meltdown from 2001 to 2002, famously decrying the rising poverty in Buenos Aires where some "take better care of a dog than a brother."

5 Burgers Aruba: Now your best breakfast bargain!



--A favorite stop for a great burger for lunch or dinner has just expanded their hours and menu to offer some of the best breakfast bargains to be found in Palm Beach. Owners Aaron and Rosie Walisever are living their dream: a home on paradise while welcoming all and sundry to their proud undertaking, 5 Burgers Aruba. The couple's fanatical dedication to giving their customers what they really want has resulted in a unique menu from an inter-

nationally known franchise with a "5", which now includes breakfast.

"You never get a second chance to make a first impression," believes Aaron. Upon entering 5 Burgers Aruba in The Village Mall in Palm Beach, one is struck by utterly spotless surroundings and a smiling, friendly, attentive service crew. Of course, the main item on the menu is burgers-the way they were meant to be, thick and juicy,

made fresh daily and 100% pure beef, the kind that made the hamburger a traditional American treat.

However, beginning at 7 a.m., patrons can now order 2 eggs any style, (omelets with 3 fillings are \$7.99) toast and coffee with unlimited refills for the special introductory price of only \$4.49, (\$5.48, with bacon) or All-you-can-eat pancakes, for \$6.99, again, with free refills on fresh coffee. Breakfast is served until 11 a.m. Famous for their fries made from fresh potatoes, Aaron has been working for months on devising the most irresistible home fries recipe, chunky and tender with skins still on; after much testing and tasting, he got the thumbs up from his harshest critic, Rosie; so this is another treat you have to try.

A glance at their burger menu will certainly tempt you to return for lunch or dinner, to sample their famous specialty items such as the Gouda,



Farmer's or Man Burger (almost 12 ounces of choice beef), and a Western Burger with Aarons' secret-recipe crispy onion rings. All of these can be personalized with an incredible array of toppings, (mushrooms, jala-peño peppers, bacon, cheese, lettuce, tomato...whatever, the list goes on) at absolutely no extra cost.

5 Burger portions are ENORMOUS! Aaron suggests that even their small serving of

fries is enough to be shared by two. He was very amused to watch a famous French chef demonstrating the best way to make fried potatoes on a gourmet cooking show and could only comment "He stole my recipe!"

Try them the English way-with vinegar, and you'll wonder how you ever ate fries without it. This same 5-star chef also swears by Gouda as the best topping for the ideal gourmet cheeseburger.

5 Burgers is now open early until 10-ish at night; delivery is available to both the high-rise and low-rise hotel and beach district at now extra cost for orders over \$50. Enjoy a great lunch without ever leaving the beach by calling 586-3904. However, we suggest you stop by and enjoy their authentic, heartfelt hospitality; it is not unusual for either owner to sit and chat, sharing their knowledge of the island while making sure patrons are happy with their meal.

Gold Coast Aruba: This is the time to invest

-- Management of Gold Coast Aruba, the island's newest and most innovative gated community, reports that sales have been very good and encouraging as the global economy recovers and people looking to purchase vacation homes have found that Gold Coast is an outstanding investment value. Director of Sales, Fito Croes has noticed a surprising percentage of owners in reality do not spend a great amount of time personally to use the villas or town homes they purchase, but are taking advantage of Gold Coast's rental services to turn their investment into ready income.

"The greater portion of home owners are using their "home away from home" in Aruba to escape the winter months, or spend holidays with the family on the island," he remarked, "but I am gratified by how many are buying because they felt secure with real estate investment on Aruba. They really study the history and economy of the island and are impressed with the political stability and continually increasing value of prime locations. Gold Coast is in the heart of Malmok, considered Aruba's most exclusive community where the value of properties has only increased over time. It is only minutes to the best beaches and all the action, and yet offers a quiet and secluded getaway; we are very pleased by



the response to our concept."

Fito, with his sister Mayrin and brother Rudy operate Cas Bon, which has been constructing homes and building developments for all budgets for nearly twenty years. "Gold Coast Aruba is the jewel in our crown," observes Fito. "We were very excited about this project and the scope of actual and planned facilities and amenities. We have spoken to countless island visitors to find out what they would really want in a permanent residence on Aruba, and took from there."

Input from frequent vacationers who have dreamed of their own home in Aruba contributed to the realization of Gold Coast Aruba which when complete will be a community

of 260 town homes, villas and condominiums with a stunning clubhouse complemented by two additional community pool areas. The Clubhouse is about to start construction and will offer to the community homeowners and visitors 2 tennis courts, full service spa and fitness center as well as a stunning pool area and is expected to be complete by early 2013. It will also house a restaurant and mini-market.

Owners who purchased upon the groundbreaking only a few short years ago, are already enjoying a nearly 50% appreciation on their investment, particularly those taking advantage of the on site management's rental services program. There is always a great demand for Aruba and facili-

ties such as those at Gold Coast, make it easy for some owners to see a valuable return on their investment.

The design of the residences and public areas is open, airy and spacious, taking full advantage of the island environment, with quality construction and finishing available. Partnering with two of Aruba's top providers of kitchens and bathrooms enables developers to offer custom options allowing buyers to individualize their homes. An elegant and chic furniture package is available or island designers will assist owners in finishing the décor to their specific tastes.

There are many aspects to purchasing property; not the

least is the future value of the investment. To further enhance this, Gold Coast management have inaugurated a number of in-house services and have recently become affiliated Interval International, the world's largest network of vacation ownership properties which provides an unlimited international pool of investors to tap for ownership and rental prospects. Property exchange for a vacation in another destination is also available through the Interval International affiliation. Gold Coast's own rental services have also proven highly successful in assisting owners in renting their villas; 24-hour security and maintenance services also tip the scales when it is time to make a decision. Aside from all this, housekeeping, child care, catering services, car rental through its partnership with AVIS car rental are also available as well as pre-shopping services so cupboards and refrigerators are stocked upon arrival, which can also be arranged through their property management department. Personnel are also available to assist in arranging restaurant reservations and island activities.

Visit their website: www.goldcoastaruba.com for more details and availability or call 586-2200 to arrange a personal tour.

Sport

Tennis: Defending champ Azarenka pulls out of Indian Wells



INDIAN WELLS (AFP) - Victoria Azarenka's bid to become the first woman in more than 20 years to successfully defend her Indian Wells title crashed to a halt Thursday as she pulled out with an injury.

The world No. 2 from Belarus pulled out shortly before her scheduled quarter-final clash with eighth-seeded Caroline Wozniacki, granting the Dane a semi-final berth on a walkover.

In an odd twist, Wozniacki's semi-final opponent also advanced on a walkover on Thursday as fourth seed Angelique Kerber went through when Samantha Stosur pulled out with a calf injury.

Organizers announced that Azarenka had a right ankle injury, and the Australian Open champion had spoken of ankle pain after her 6-3, 6-1 fourth-round victory over Urszula Radwanska.

But she said an MRI performed Wednesday showed inflammation and tendinitis in her foot, and doctors had told her rest was the best medicine.

"There is big inflammation and tendinitis," she said. "It cannot get better with me playing on it, especially playing last three matches on it, it's just worse."

"I tried not to practice yesterday and see if it will settle down a little bit."

Azarenka said she still hoped to play the elite hard-court tournament starting in Miami next week.

She planned to travel to Florida on Sunday, but would have to see how the injury responds to rest and treatment.

Azarenka is unbeaten on the court in 2013, a 17-0 run that includes the Australian Open and a title in Doha.

But this is the second time she has surrendered a walkover. She withdrew before her scheduled semi-final against Serena Williams in Brisbane with an infected right toe that resulted from a pedicure.

Azarenka, who routed Maria Sharapova in last year's final, was trying to become the first woman since Martina Navratilova in 1990-91 to win back-to-back Indian Wells titles.

"I tried absolutely everything I could do, but I have been advised by the doctor, by my own team, that it's just a very high risk to make it much worse," she said of her decision to withdraw.

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Football: Dortmund, Bayern eager to avoid all-German quarter



BERLIN (AFP) - Although Bayern Munich are desperate to avoid Barcelona in today's Champions League quarter-final draw, the last team the Bavarians want to meet in the last eight are German rivals Borussia Dortmund.

"Anyone who wants Barcelona next is a masochist!" quipped Germany star Thomas Mueller after Bayern squeezed past Arsenal on away goals after drawing 3-3 on aggregate by losing the return leg 2-0 in Munich on

Wednesday.

Mueller's misgivings are obvious. Barcelona produced the stand out performance of the last 16 ties when they bounced back from a 2-0 defeat at AC Milan to floor the Italians 4-0 in the return leg in Spain on Tuesday night.

Munich join Dortmund, Galatasaray, Malaga, Barcelona, Real Madrid, Paris St Germain and Juventus for today's draw in Nyon, Switzerland.

Bayern are 20 points clear

of Dortmund at the top of the Bundesliga and knocked out German Cup holders Borussia in last month's quarter-final with a 1-0 win in Munich. The teams are due to meet again in the league in May.

Having beaten Shakhtar Donetsk 5-2 on aggregate to reach the last eight of the Champions League for the first time in 15 years, Dortmund want to go all the way to the London final on May 25.

For the first time in 17 years there are no English teams in the quarter-finals, while Galatasaray midfielder Hamit Altintop said he would love to see the Turkish league leaders draw his old club Bayern Munich.

The first-leg of the Champions League quarter-finals will be played on April 2 and 3 with the second legs on April 9 and 10.

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NBA: Bryant out indefinitely with sprained ankle



ATLANTA (AFP) - Kobe Bryant severely sprained his left ankle in the last minute of Wednesday night's 96-92 loss to the Atlanta Hawks and is

out indefinitely, the Los Angeles Lakers announced.

Bryant tried to tie the game on a baseline jumper in the final seconds when he collided with Dahntay Jones and came down on his foot.

The 15-time NBA all-star Bryant missed the shot and dropped to the court in pain. He eventually got up and walked off under his own power.

X-rays proved negative but he is expected to be re-examined by team doctors on Thursday.

Bryant shot 11-of-33 from the field against the Hawks and finished with 31 points on the night.

After the game, Bryant blasted Jones, saying that it was one of his signature shots and under normal circumstances he would never injure himself.

Bryant also went on Twitter to express his anger at Jones and the referees for not calling a foul on the play.

"#dangerousplay that should have been called. Period," Bryant tweeted.

Jones shot back via his Twitter account: "Tape doesn't lie. Ankle was turned on the floor after the leg kick out that knocked him off balance. I would never try to hurt the man."

Bryant has carried the Lak-

ers on his back for most of this season and is one of the top scorers in the NBA with a 27.5 per game average.

Kyle Korver grabbed Bryant's missed shot and made two free throws at the other end with just two seconds left to ice the win for the Hawks, who had lost four straight against the Lakers. Korver finished with 15 points.

Meanwhile referees should have called Atlanta Hawks forward Dahntay Jones for a foul on Kobe Bryant the NBA announced Thursday

Eagles sign CB Cary Williams

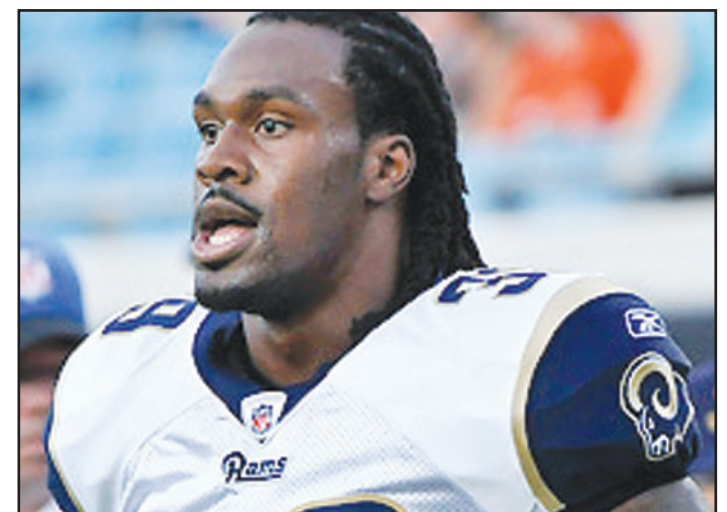
PHILADELPHIA -- The Philadelphia Eagles have made a splash in their defensive backfield, signing cornerback Cary Williams and safety Kenny Phillips in free agency.

The moves, announced by the team on Thursday, came two days after the Eagles released cornerback Nnamdi Asomugha in the wake of two disappointing seasons in Philadelphia.

Williams agreed to a three-year deal, and is coming off a big season with the Super Bowl champion Baltimore Ravens. Williams' deal is worth \$17 million, including \$10.5 million guaranteed, a league source told ESPN NFL Insider Adam Schefter.

Phillips comes to Philadelphia on a one-year deal after five seasons with the rival New York Giants. A first-round selection of the Giants in 2008, Phillips, 26, had four interceptions and 72 tackles in 2011, as New York won the Super Bowl. A former Miami Hurricane, Phillips has battled knee injuries throughout his career.

NFL: Atlanta Falcons agree to terms with Steven Jackson



-- NFL.com's Ian Rapoport reported the veteran running back agreed to terms on a contract Thursday with the Atlanta Falcons, according to a team source. ESPN's Adam Schefter had the first report, and the Falcons later announced that Jackson has agreed to a three-year contract.

Jackson, 29, spent the first nine seasons of his career with the St. Louis Rams, racking up 10,135 yards and 56 rushing touchdowns as one of the NFL's premier rushers. Jackson asked for and was given the ability to void his contract with the Rams with the goal of catching on with a contender in a featured role.

This makes him a potentially ideal fit with the Falcons,

who recently cut ties with Michael Turner. Jackson should see plenty of work, though expect Jacquizz Rodgers to get his touches as a change-of-pace option.

Jackson consistently was linked to the Green Bay Packers this week, but the Packers suspected all along that Jackson's reps only were using Green Bay to drive up his price with the Falcons.

Now, Jackson joins a veritable All-Star team in Atlanta. The Falcons' offense was dangerous last season with quarterback Matt Ryan, wide receivers Julio Jones and Roddy White and tight end Tony Gonzalez. If Jackson plays to his reputation, there is no ceiling.

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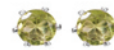
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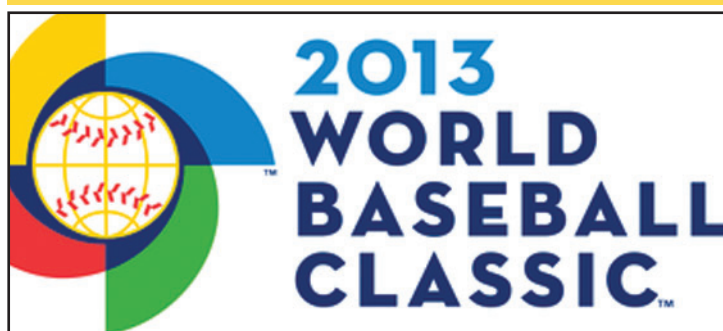
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Baseball: World Baseball Classic



MIAMI (AFP) - Puerto Rico rallied from a 3-0 deficit to score three runs in the eighth inning and beat Italy 4-3 Wednesday night to remain alive in the 2013 World Baseball Classic.

Alex Rios scored the eventual game-winning run from second base on Andy Gonzalez's infield hit in the eighth for Puerto Rico, which eliminated Italy from the tournament with the win.

Anthony Rizzo's bases-clearing double gave the Italians a 3-0 lead in the fifth.

Yadier Molina then scored on a fielding error in the sixth to make it 3-1 for Italy.

Puerto Rico pitcher Hiram Burgos allowed three hits and struck out four batters in 3 2/3 innings.

Puerto Rico broke through for the lead in the eighth

against Italian pitchers Brian Sweeney and Pat Venditte.

Carlos Beltran walked and Molina singled to put runners at first and third base for Puerto Rico. Sweeney replaced pitcher Nick Pugliese, and Mike Aviles beat out a potential double-play ball to make it 3-2.

Rios then hit a line single to right field to set up another first-and-third situation. Luis Figueroa's sacrifice fly to centre field tied the game.

Gonzalez then hit a infield bouncer and the ball got past third baseman Alex Liddi. Shortstop Jack Santora's throw to first was low and wide so Rios raced home.

Puerto Rico closer Fernando Cabrera fanned Liddi to end the game and record the save.

Puerto Rico next plays today against

Figure skating: Kim off to promising start at Worlds



LONDON (AFP) - Reigning Olympic champ Kim Yu-na gave herself high marks for her performance in the World Figure Skating Championship Thursday which marks her return to ISU competition after a two-year hiatus.

The judges were not quite as impressed but the crowd love it, rewarding her 'Kiss of the Vampire' short routine with a standing ovation at the Budweiser Gardens arena.

Although the South Korean superstar topped the field in the women's opening round at the ISU world figure skating championships ahead of defending champ Carolina Kostner, the adjudicators found fault with the level of difficulty for her spins and were stingy with their performance

quality scores.

Kim earned 69.97 points, well off her record score of 78.50 set in the Olympic year. Still, she is well-positioned to win her second world title in Saturday's final considering the subpar result of Mao Asada, her long-time archrival from Japan.

Asada landed her trademark triple Axel on two feet although it appeared fully rotated, but her downfall was a planned triple loop which popped open in mid-air and turned just once.

Asada, undefeated this season in ISU competition after struggling to retool her jumps the previous two years, is back in sixth place with 62.1 points.

Kanako Murakami, the third Japanese entry here, was

the surprise of the afternoon, finishing in third place with 66.64 points just behind Italy's Kostner who scored 66.86 despite a hard fall on the second jump in her triple-triple combination.

Canadian Kaetlyn Osmond, just 17 and making her senior worlds debut, put an impressive 64.37 points on the board with a saucy Mambo interpretation.

American Ashley Wagner is fifth (63.98) and, along with Osmond, Asada and her countrywoman Akiko Suzuki (seventh with 61.17), still in contention for a medal. Gold would be a stretch, though, unless Kim falters.

Besides aspiring to land on the podium here and establish their status as frontrunners for the 2014 Olympic podium in Sochi, the elite competitors here are on a mission to earn their countries maximum entries for the Sochi Games.

"My first goal is to get more than two tickets for the Olympic Games for Korea. Beside myself, I would like young Korean skaters to experience the Olympic Games," Kim said. To accomplish that, Kim would have to finish first or second.

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